CHILDREN'S MUSEUM NEWS

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THE FLUTE PLAYER FRANS HALS
GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

THE FLUTE PLAYER

YOU have read about the Netherlands in geography; and you have found what an interesting country it is with its canals, its windmills, and its tulips. The Netherlands is interesting to us for another reason also—for its many fine artists who have painted this quaint country, the homes and the people. You will remember the great painter of Dutch people, Rembrandt, whose story was in the Children's Museum News several months ago. In this issue you will read about another Dutch painter, whose name was Frans Hals. This artist lived at the same time as Rembrandt, about three hundred years ago.

In the Toledo Museum of Art there is a lively painting by Frans Hals, called The Flute Player. Hals painted the people of his town so truthfully that even now we know just how rollicking and good-natured they were. In the reproduction on the front of this Children's Museum News you can see that the musician seems very much alive. In the painting itself he fairly marches out of the frame as he swings along in time to his shrill tune. You can almost hear the sound of his pipe, and almost see him nod as he passes you.

Always the people in Frans Hals' pictures seem to be really living. It is said that often he sketched his friends, or the people at the inn, while they laughed and talked, or sang, or even as they drank.

In order to paint actions and expressions which lasted only a moment, as these did, the artist had to draw and paint very rapidly and also very accurately. And this Frans Hals could do better than most men. For sometimes he painted pictures without even sketching the figures on his canvases first.

The Flute Player shows us that Hals was a skillful painter. See how he has caught a slight smile on the puckered lips of the young man as he blows. He does not blow with full cheeks as when you blow up a balloon but he directs a thin stream of air into the narrow opening of his pipe. Look closely at his cheeks. Can you blow that way too?

See how the cheeks have been painted—with light and shadow and with colors also. Frans Hals liked to work with a brush full of paint. He did not think it necessary to smooth over the thick brush strokes. Today we feel that these rugged strokes give strength and life to his pictures. Even though he used his paint thickly he could

suggest thin cloth as well as thick, soft feathers as well as hard wood, and the smooth softness of flesh. Can you find these differences in the picture? See how well he modeled the eyelids and what a merry expression the eyes have. How strong and solid the hands are. We are certain the fingers can move swiftly up and down the flute.

Frans Hals' pictures are seldom painted with brilliant color. At the time when The Flute Player was made he was using golden brown tones in much of his painting, and so you will find them in this one, especially in the heavy cloak and on the shadowy wall behind the figure. However, there is a strong red in the cheeks and cool greyed green in the shadows about the face.

Have you been wondering how Hals made his flute player swing along at such a rapid pace? Perhaps the design of the picture has something to do with it. For in order to show movement a picture must be built on a design which has the feeling of movement.

Look at the drawing which has a single curving line swinging across it. If you follow the curve closely you will see that it travels through important points in the picture, over finger, on cuffs, across lips, up the nose and along curling feathers. In some places we almost lose parts of it, but these are suggested for you by the dotted sections. This large twisting, curving line itself gives the feeling of movement. Don't you think the sharp lower curve swinging toward the left, suggests pushing? If the line alone can suggest these things a picture built on that line will surely have movement.

The other drawing shows you many rhythmical curves which swing through the picture like the tune of the pipe. See how the curves flow into each other, some are large, some are small and altogether they too give movement to the picture.

When we see how thoughtfully an artist has worked to compose and paint a fine picture, we begin to understand that his painting is not all play. And when a painter does his work as beautifully as Frans Hals, we have many good reasons for thinking that he is a great artist.

ART TALKS AND MOTION PICTURES

The children's Saturday Art Talks will be held in Museum galleries at 2 and at 3:30 o'clock. Children will be divided into three groups for each period, young, intermediate, and older. The interesting and important objects from many countries in the galleries will show more vividly and realistically than lantern slides the art and life of the past and present.

The Sunday Art Talks will be given at 2 and at 3 o'clock in the Auditorium.

No definite programs for the year are being announced at this time. Subjects will be chosen which follow the special interests shown by the children, and will include a variety of subjects to appeal not only to children who have been coming to the Museum regularly, but to those who will be coming to the Art Talks for the first time.

Motion picture programs will be made up of cartoon, art, travel and drama films. The hours for showing on Sunday are 2:30 and 3:30 P.M. and on Saturday at 1:15, 2:45 and 4:15 P.M.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC ACTIVITIES

THREE classes will be formed for the children who come to the Museum for training in listening to music. In addition, the class in Creative Music will be continued. All will meet on Saturday morning, October 3, for registration according to the following instructions:

9:00 A.M., in the Children's Room: Advanced Class. This class is designed for young people who have had not less than two years of previous Museum Music Appreciation work, and who are at least eleven years of age. High School students seriously interested in music will also be admitted. All young people desiring to become members of this group should confer with Mrs. Van Doren.

10:00 A.M., in the Auditorium: Music Appreciation for Intermediate Children. This group is made up of children not younger than eight years of age; no previous Museum music training is required, but members of this class should be able to take some notes during the lesson. Notebooks are not required but it is advisable that the children keep them. Notebooks are graded and the best ones are to be displayed along with similar work done in the other branches of Museum instruction at the end of the year.

11:15 A.M., in the Lecture Room: Music Appreciation for Young Children. The work for this group is planned for children between five and eight. There is no written work.

In each class the work is varied from year to year so that a child may remain in his proper age group for the required length of time without finding undue repetition of material. Some pieces of musical literature are studied each year, as are also the instruments which make up an orchestra. During the coming year the children will again be privileged to attend as guests of the Museum two matinee symphony orchestra concerts in the Peristyle.